1263
COMIC SHOP NEWS
THE RINSE

The Dirty World of The Rinse

A laundryman can make a lot of money. Don't think you're going to get rich scrubbing shirts, though—we're talking about a very different kind of laundryman here, as readers are about to learn in *Gary Phillips'* gritty series ***The Rinse.***

Phillips explained the premise of the edgy crime drama. "***The Rinse*** concerns the affable Jeff Sinclair, a seemingly humble money manager in San Francisco's Financial District. Oddly, he doesn't own a computer of any type, has no file cabinets, and uses burners—that is, disposable cell phones—as regularly as a weeping soap opera fan uses Kleenex.

"In the opening pages of the first issue of ***The Rinse,*** we learn that Jeff is really a high end money launderer. A million in $100 bills weighs 22 pounds. The launderer's job is to reduce the money's bulk—and more than anything else, to obscure the origin of his clients' funds from the tax man.

"Then, while Sinclair is having a drink at a watering hole he frequents in the Financial District, the opportunity and the danger of doing the rinse on $25 million drops into Jeff's lap..."

As Sinclair gets more and more involved in laundering this huge load of cash, he begins to truly consider his line of work and the evil that he facilitates. Gradually, he realizes that he must find a way to clean the cash and wash away his own sins at the same time.

The Rinse is far from *Gary Phillips* first foray into the realm of mystery and crime drama, nor is it his first comics book series. "I'm primarily a prose mystery and crime writer, but I've loved comics since I was a kid," Phillips said. "I've also edited prose anthologies such as ***Orange County Noir.*** In comics, I've done work for Boom Studios (***High Rollers***), Dark Horse, Vertigo (***Cowboys,*** my crime graphic novel from them, is out now), Oni, and Moonstone. In fact Moonstone recently reissued the private eye miniseries I did for Vertigo a few years back as ***Angeltown: The Nate Hollis Investigations,*** a graphic novel with two new added prose short stories. I also have a short story in Moonstone's upcoming ***Green Hornet Casefiles*** anthology—and as I've mentioned in the pages of this fine publication before, I'm doing ***That Man Flint*** for them as well!"

YOU HEAD BACK TO YOUR HOTEL. I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU. BUT DON'T LOOK FOR ME, GOT IT?
YOU SEE SOMETHING?
COULD BE I HAVE AN OVERACTIVE IMAGINATION, BUT I LIKE TO BE CAUTIOUS.
LOOK, I'M SORRY... MAYBE NEXT TIME?
NO DOUBT IT.
BOOM IN CHINATOWN.

How does Phillips decide which stories work best in graphic novel format and which work best as prose? "I get a lot of ideas that can work as either a prose story or in sequential form... either as a comic or as something I might want to even try my hand at as a spec screenplay or TV pitch. Conversely, some stories work best in comics form, as I sit and figure out the plot and the skeletal particulars of the story, I get a sense of how best to tell the story.

"The great thing with comics is the marriage of words and images, and that you get to work with artists who are storytellers in their own right. You get to bounce ideas off each other as you come up with what the characters look like, how they dress, their manner of speech and so on. It's quite a charge."

Phillips' interest in comics goes back quite a while. "I've been a comics reader from way back—used to write and draw my own comics. Ultimately, I became a writer because I'm a lousy artist," Phillips said with a laugh.

Phillips pointed out that comics and noir tales have a long and intertwined history. "There are a goodly number of noteworthy graphic novels in this genre. Wasn't there supposed to be a reissue of the retro private eye story ***Red Tide*** by *Steranko*? I have my yellowing, brittle pages original ***Fiction Illustrated*** version he did for *Byron Preiss* from back in the day. Steranko did two tall, rectangular panels per page with justified blocks of text beneath each illustration. Quite innovative.

"And what about the comics version Marvel Illustrated Books did in paperback format of ***Blade Runner***? (Cover by *Steranko,* by the way.) This also used a two panel per page format, but not as uniformly as in ***Red Tide,*** with dialogue balloons and captions. It had a great *Archie Goodwin* script, with *Al Williamson* (among others) handling the art. Also quite nice."

Phillips is aware that crime and mystery tales don't always work well in comics form, however. "The best mysteries are dialogue heavy," Phillips said. "If, say, there was a sequential version of a *Ross MacDonald* Lew Archer novel, there would be panel after panel of talking heads. Indeed, in some of those novels, there is no physical action except walking, driving, or answering a phone. Who wants to see that in a comic book? But as this was sharp, clever dialogue and the inner insightful reflections told from the first-person perspective of the detective, they work superbly as prose."

The Rinse teams Phillips with artist *Marc Laming,* whose straightforward style and design sense is at times reminiscent of *Dave Gibbons,* a master artist whose strength is his clean illustrative design and nuanced design sense. Is this style is more effective than a more experimental graphics approach? Can art sometimes be too trendy for a project that is very strong on plot? "First off, I can't praise *Marc Laming's* art enough. Like *Brian Hurtt,* who illustrated ***Cowboys,*** Marc pencils and inks his own work—and to me that's an added dimension in realizing the story on the page through solid, muscular art.

"And yeah, I might be something of a purist or old-fashioned here, but to me a crime or mystery story requires clean, straightforward representation; you don't want the art to be as complicated as the story might be. We have to be able to take the reader though the paces and come out on the other end satisfied for the ride."

As a protagonist who works outside of the law, Jeff Sinclair is in good company. ***Criminal, Last Days of American Crime,*** The Stark adaptations--they all do a great job of making the criminal a strong and sympathetic character, as Phillips does in the pages of ***The Rinse.*** "The anti-hero has been with us a long time," Phillips pointed out. "King David slew a lot of dudes in the Bible, lusted after some fine babes, and still got God's blessings. In the late 1920s and in the '30s, *Dashiell Hammett* wrote a lot of short stories and a couple of novels about an unnamed private eye called the Continental Op, an operative for the Continental Detective Agency. This is the guy in the novel ***Red Harvest,*** in the town of Personville—called Poisonville by its residents—who sets the gangster-capitalists against the corporate-capitalists, leading to much bloodshed.

"And then we have such fare as ***Breaking Bad*** and ***Dexter*** on cable. Writers and readers know the villain is often the most exciting character to write. He or she has few limits. The trick with the anti-hero, though, is how much do you combine those limitless qualities by giving your character some kind of code, some lines he will not cross. They operate in a hostile universe and are ruthless, but only to a point. My man Jeff Sinclair launders money, but he himself is not greedy—big money does not interest him. It's the thrill of trying to outwit his pursuers, particularly the fetching and smart IRS agent Della Dash, that motivates him."

If ***The Rinse*** finds a sufficiently large audience, is there a chance that we might see more Jeff Sinclair stories in the future? "All of us are at Boom are hoping that readers will respond to ***The Rinse*** and want to see more of the adventures of the redoubtable Mr. Sinclair. He has many more stories to tell, after all— money laundering is the third largest, underground enterprise in the world!"

Boom is so confident that readers will want to stay with ***The Rinse*** for the full cycle that they're offering the first issue for the bargain price of $1. Marketing director *Chip Mosher* explained what convinced them that this project was the right one for such an investment on Boom's part. "After reading the script and receiving the pencils, we *knew* this comic would be a hit. So to get this story in as many hands as possible, we gave it a $1 price tag; this way readers will get a pretty big bang for their buck. And in this economic climate, who *doesn't* love a deal? We're sure that once readers get into the world of ***The Rinse,*** they'll want to come back every month!

"*Gary Phillips* has shown time and again that he is the man when it comes to crime and mystery.In ***The Rinse,*** Gary's created a hard-hitting story that immediately grabbed us and didn't let go. From the slick characters to the gritty San Francisco setting Gary has built, this is a world that we want to explore and know more about. That's the sign of a good comic and a series worth backing."

The Rinse #1, a $1 comic, is scheduled for late August release.

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

Produced by *Comic Shop News* in cooperation with *newsarama.com*

DC: The New 52 & You

This is the week that DC's New 52 begins with the final issue of ***Flashpoint*** and the first issue of *Geoff Johns & Jim Lee's* ***Justice League.*** *CSN* has kept readers updated on DC's plans for the line, as well as the contents and creative teams of the 52 titles, but our readers had unanswered questions, so we went straight to DC Editor-in-Chief *Bob Harras* and Executive Editor *Eddie Berganza* for answers. They took the time to address some of the most frequently-asked questions on the minds of *CSN* readers.

DC has made it clear that there is an intense emphasis on getting books out on schedule--but when in-house deadlines are missed, will DC bring in new talent to continue existing story lines, or will they use fill-in or inventory stories to keep books on schedule? "If a book is running late, our first plan will be to continue the story moving forward in any way possible," Harras said. "Our commitment is to get these books out on time, to give readers a series that they will enjoy, and to have it on sale the day that we promised. We're all cognizant of the importance of this."

"Everybody is really working hard; we know and they know that deadlines are imperative," Berganza added. "We are emphasizing that, and our creators are working with that in mind."

"Everyone is very proud of what they're doing and they want to get these books out there so that people can see them. They're really on board with getting books out there every month, which is great," Harras said.

Was ***Flashpoint*** always conceived of as the centerpiece of a major DC relaunch always planned, or was it case of different plans coalescing? "Everything has been worked on for a long time," Berganza said. "We knew that ***Flashpoint*** was going to be a very big event for DC. You see the little pieces that are being dropped into ***Flashpoint***, offering clues about the New 52 and reflecting some of the new books. Everything will be clear by the end of ***Flashpoint #5***, and readers will see how important ***Flashpoint*** is to the whole relaunch."

"It seems like it's been an incredibly long time since we made the decision, but this has been an ongoing discussion that we've had creatively for a while now," Harras said. "It was all developed as part of a master plan, and it's a great read. I think that readers will be very happy once they see how it all fits together."

Does The New 52 require more hands-on editorial involvement to make sure that things are coordinated properly? "In essence, because everything is new, I worked out a timeline," Berganza said. "I did this to let everyone know where we are with everything in the New 52. You have the ***Justice League***, which takes place five years before everything else, for instance. This provides a signpost for creators, and the editors work with them to make sure that everything fits together."

Will the ***Justice League*** continue to take

place in the past? "No, that's just in the first story arc," Harras said. "After that, we move into the present."

Will the New 52 move towards single-issue standalone story lines, or will most books feature multi-part arcs? "I think it varies across the line," Harras said. "We'll have some single issues, some multi-part stories—different books and different creative teams have different plans, but all of the stories are important to the direction of the series.

DC has pushed the 52 aspect of the relaunch, as is evident by the New 52 designation, which divides evenly into thirteen titles each week. Is 52 the target number for the total DCU output each month? "I think that's the broad baseline, to have 52 titles," Harras said. "It's not the end-all and be-all, though, because there will be miniseries and other projects that might vary that number a bit. We're always talking to other projects and other creators down the line, of course, and nothing changes in that regard."

"We already have some things in the works," Berganza added, "both miniseries and ongoing series."

Will the emphasis on the New 52 lead DC to cut back on pre-New 52 reprints in the publisher's collected editions program? "There will be collections of the New 52, of course," Harras said, "beginning with our enormous hardcover collecting the first issues of all 52 relaunch titles. But that doesn't affect our collections of older material as well; the general plan going forward is to offer a full line of collected editions from DC."

Does this include both the ***Showcase*** and ***DC Archives*** programs? "Yes," Harras said, "both programs will *definitely* continue."

Now that DC is stressing line-wide continuity in the New 52, do the 52 multiverses still exist? Will they play a part in The New 52, or will the multiverses be put on hold for a while to allow for the development of The New 52? "That's a good question," Harras said. All I can say right now is 'wait and see'… I can tell you that we have a lot of things planned."

"There are things we're working on that we have yet to reveal," Berganza said. "I think that readers will be very intrigued and very pleased with what we have coming up in this regard. Everything is being looked at across the line.

Neither Harras nor Berganza would say what role *Grant Morrison's* in-the-works ***Multiversity*** might play in the future of the DC Multiverse, only saying that Multiversity is a linchpin in any multiverse plans.

What about the ever-popular Elseworlds concept? Will DC offer any new Elseworlds projects--perhaps some set in the pre-New 52 DCU? "Elseworlds has been on hiatus for a while," Berganza said. "When we clarify the multiverse, Elseworlds fans might have a better idea what we have planned."

There have been rumors that DC has put a moratorium on crossovers and guest appearances for the first three months of the New 52, at least. Harras had heard the rumors, and was quick to say, "I think that's been misconstrued. It has not come from us; there is no moratorium on guest appearances. This is a shared universe, so elements from one book will affect others. As for crossovers—I guess it depends on what a crossover is. But I can definitely say that there is no moratorium.

With the New 52 basically offering a fresh starting place for the DCU as a world in which superheroes have been around for a relatively short time, is there still a place for the *Earth One* concept, which also introduces fresh takes on DC heroes in a world that has no prior superheroes? "There is *definitely* a place for ***Earth One***," Berganza said, "and I can say that with certainty, since I'm the editor of those books. We have two in the works right now. *Geoff Johns* and *Gary Frank* are doing a great job on ***Batman***, and *J. Michael Straczynski* and *Shane Davis* are moving ahead with the second ***Superman: Earth One*** graphic novel. This is a totally separate take on these characters with no connections to the New 52, of course. So I can definitely say that the Earth One concept will continue."

And what about DC's ***All-Star*** line? Will those books return—and in particular, will readers see the final issues of the *Frank Miller-Jim Lee* ***Batman and Robin, The Boy Wonder?*** "The ***All-Star*** line is on hiatus for a while," Harras said. "I think that there are always plans to do something with that further down the line, but right now we're concentrating on the New 52."

And finally, what is the ultimate goal of the New 52 relaunch? "Our ultimate goal is to get people excited about what we have coming," Harras said. "We have great characters, and we have great talent working on those characters. Our artists and writers are really engaged, and they're turning in some phenomenal work here. It's a starting point for everybody. Out of that starting point will be stories that will excite our readers. I hope that everyone really enjoys what we have in the works, and that they feel like they want to keep coming back month after month to see what's happening next!"

CSNsider

- DC has announced that they will offer one of their most popular promotions in conjunction with the release of ***Legion: Secret Origin #1.*** DC will work with retailers to offer a Legion of Super-Heroes Promotional Flight Ring with the first issue of this six-part limited series by *Paul Levitz, Chris Batista, & Rich Perotta.* Both the ring and the first issue of ***Legion: Secret Origin*** are slated to reach comic shops on October 3rd.
- As most fans had already deduced, DC is indeed cancelling orders on ***Batman Incorporated #s 9 & 10;*** the issues will be resolicited in early 2012.
- *Frank Cho* has posted on his website that he is writing and illustrating an ***X-Men*** miniseries. "I can't say too much right now," Cho wrote,

SPIDER-MAN

BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER

SPIDEY HAS JUST SAVED A COUPLE FROM A CAREENING AUTO...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU SURVIVED THAT CRASH!
I--MANAGED TO SLIDE--UNDER THE CAR--AT THE LAST SECOND!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 8-15
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"but this miniseries will have three of the hottest women in the Marvel Universe."

•Orders for ***Doom Patrol: Fire Away TP*** and ***Hitman Volume 5: Who Dares Wins TP*** have been cancelled. The former will not be resolicited, while the latter will be resolicited in the near future under the title ***Hitman Volume 5: Tommy's Heroes TP.***

•*Victor Von Doom* gets his moment in the spotlight in the eponymous ***Victor Von Doom*** four-part limited series by *Nick Spencer & Becky Cloonan*. The series will chronicle the young Von Doom's efforts to free his mother's soul from Hell. Look for the first issue in November.

•***Absolute Promethea Volume 3 HC,*** originally slated for September release, has been pushed back to the first week of December.

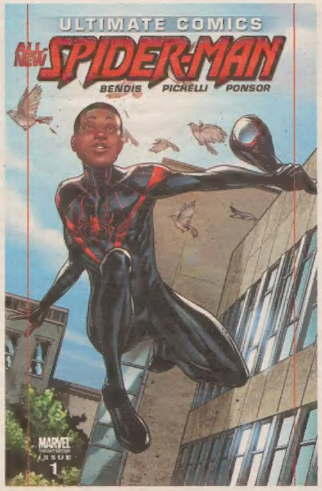
•Boom Studios is venturing into the world of comics biographies with the politically themed ***Decision 2012*** series, offering looks at the various announced candidates for the 2012 Presidential election. The November-released books will include biographies of ***Michelle Bachmann, Herman Cain, Newt Gingrich, Jon Huntsman, Barack Obama, Sarah Palin*** (okay, she's not an announced candidate yet, but her influence has earned her a spot in the series), ***Ron Paul, Tim Pawlenty, Rick Perry, Mitt Romney, & Rick Santorum.*** Boom is even conducting their own "straw poll": they're keeping a tally of the number of copies ordered of each book, and will declare the subject of the most-ordered title to be the winner of their poll. (Boom adds that, "if your candidate's comic book doesn't get pre-ordered by at least 1500 copies, it will not be printed.")

•The ***JLA Trophy Room: Red Lantern Battery Prop Replica,*** originally scheduled for early August release, has been rescheduled to early November.

•Margaret Weis Productions has acquired the rights to create a ***Marvel Heroes Role-Playing Game,*** "which we are making a 2012 release, Margaret Weis Productions Creative Director *Cam Banks* said. "There will be sixteen books, and the first of them will be launched in February. The initial release is the ***Basic Game,*** a softcover $20 book [that] will have the rule book in there, as well as a sort of mini-event based on *Brian Michael Bendis'* ***New Avengers #1-6.***

"After the initial February release, we will have these big event books... The first event book will be ***Civil War.*** There will be two versions of the event book: the ***Premium Version*** will include the operations manual, the same rulebook from the basic game, and the ***Essential*** version, which has all the ***Civil War*** information without the rulebook..."

•Marvel has added a 1-for-15 ***Ultimate Comics Spider-Man #1 Miles Morales Variant*** (JUN118248), slated for 9/7 release. Check with the folks at your friendly neighborhood comic shop for info on price and availability.



•***Amazing Spider-Man*** writer *Dan Slott* gets his moment in the sun on the cover of the ***Amazing Spider-Man #669*** 1-for-15 variant. This limited cover will feature Slott swinging through Manhattan with Spider-Man in tow.

•*Steven Sanders* has replaced *Tim Seeley* as artist of ***Generation Hope #12.***

•*Alan Davis* fans, here are two things you can look forward to: first off, he'll be joining *Ed Brubaker* for a ***Captain America*** story arc. Secondly, he'll be writing and illustrating a series of interconnected annuals launching in January and February, featuring the FF, Daredevil, and Wolverine—and Davis's ClanDestine will play a major part in all three annuals!

•Marvel editor *Ralph Macchio* did something almost unheard of in mid-August: he *retired!* Macchio, who has worked with Marvel for 35 years, isn't leaving comics, however: readers can look forward to seeing Macchio-written comics in the near future.

His Name Is Mud

Paul Grist is known for offbeat comics such as the ensemble-cast drama ***Jack Staff*** and the rather low-key crime drama ***Kane.*** This fall, Grist turns his attention once again to the world of superheroes with the launch of ***Mudman.***

"This is my 'Back to Basics' superhero comic," Grist said. "It's not about alien menaces or cosmic powers—though they may pop up once in a while; it's all about growing up and finding your way in the world, and how the decisions that you make can affect others. In a way, it's probably the most autobiographical comic I've ever done. But with added mud."

Mudman will be published by Image Comics, Grist's print home for many years. "Paul has been one of my favorite creators since writer *Robert Loren Fleming* turned me onto ***Kane*** back in the '90s," Image Comics Publisher *Eric Stephenson* said. "His style looks deceptively simple, but he's a master of his craft, capable of some of the cleverest story-

JUST WISH I COULD'VE NABBED THE CAR'S DRIVER—
--OR THE PASSENGER WHO WAS WEARING THIS!
?
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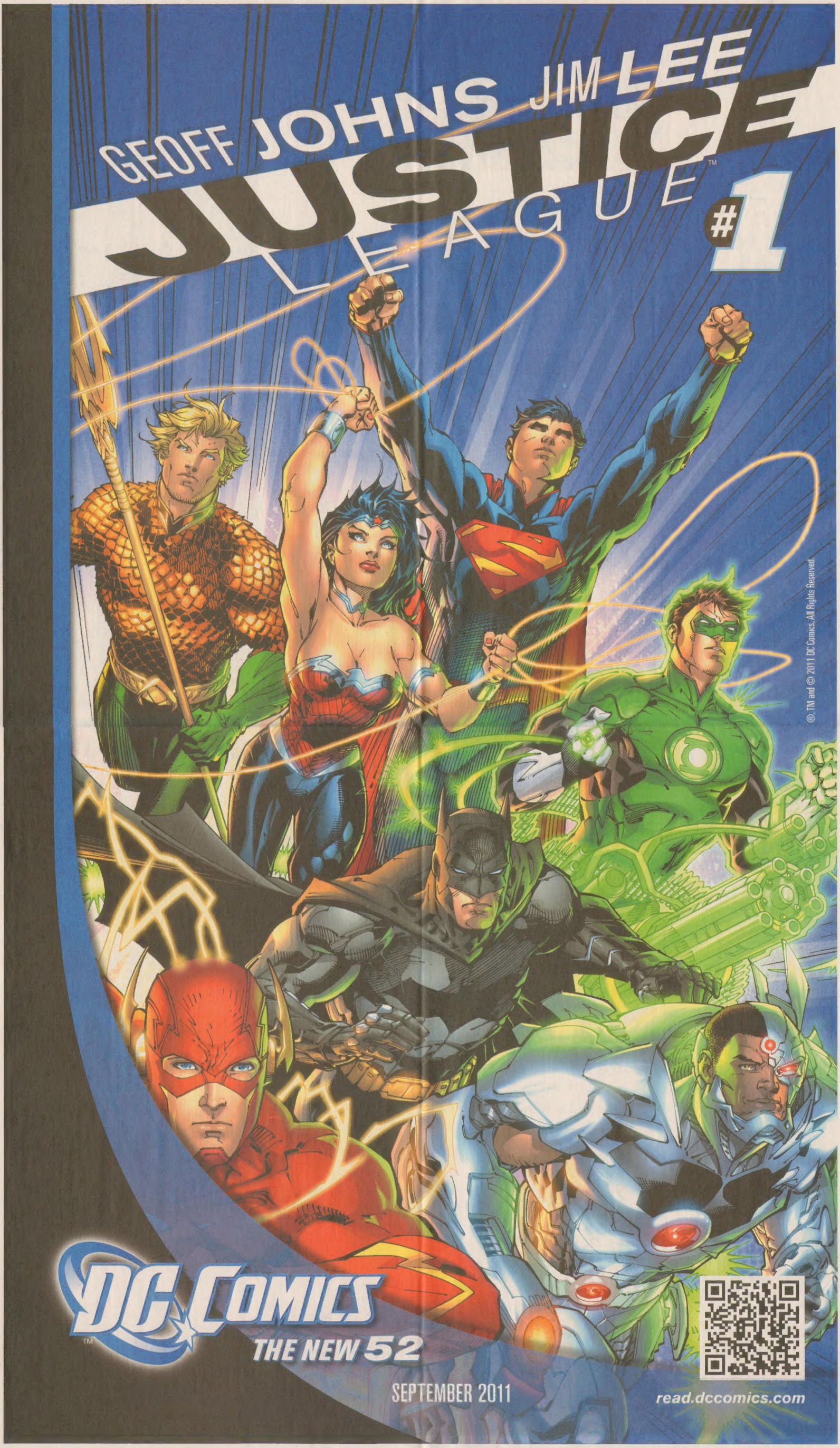
RREEEEEEE
WELL, MAYBE THE COPS PICKED 'EM UP!
WWW.KINGFEATURES.COM
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 8-16
STAY WHERE YOU ARE, WEB-SWINGER!
YOU'VE GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO!
Huh?!

WHY ARE YOU HASSLING SPIDER-MAN?
HE JUST SAVED OUR LIVES!
MAYBE HE DID, AND MAYBE HE DIDN'T—
©2011 Marvel Characters, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Distributed by King Features Syndicate
BUT A JEWELRY STORE DOWN THE STREET WAS JUST LOOTED—
AND HE'S THE ONLY GUY STRONG ENOUGH TO HAVE RIPPED THROUGH ITS BARRED WINDOW!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 8-17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telling in comics. It's a big thrill for me that Paul's part of Image, and I can't wait to see what he does with *Mudman*."

As the series begins, readers will meet teenager Owen Craig, whose school year is getting off to a bad start... and with each passing moment, it gets even worse. He gets run over, he gets detention, and then he learns his father has actually been taken hostage by armed bank robbers. But that's only the beginning of his problems. Now his body appears to be turning into mud!

Mudman #1 is slated for November release.

Raven Gregory Invites You to The Theater

Zenescope has built its reputation on dark fantasy dramas inspired by fairy tales, legends, and myths—but that's not all that the company offers. They've ventured into licensed properties with *Charmed;* science fiction-themed horror-suspense with *Waking;* edgy superheroics with *Fly;* and this fall, they're paying a visit to *The Theater,* courtesy of writer *Raven Gregory.*

"*The Theater* is the story of an old-fashioned movie theater which holds a dark secret that threatens the lives of those who dare enter it," Gregory said. "And when an unsuspecting couple decides to visit the old movie house to watch some horror films, they soon find that something full of horror is also watching them."

What made an old theater the ideal setting for Gregory's horror story? What does the setting bring to the mystique of the horror story? "There something about the movie theater itself that has become so engrained in our society," Gregory explained. "It's become this visual fairy tale bed-time story that becomes more believable year after year after year. There is a real sense that, when you walk through those door, you are hanging your sense of suspension of disbelief on the hat rack and just going along for the ride for the next hour and a half. There's a real safety in that. This is my way of taking that nice blanket wrap of safety and ripping it to shreds."

Gregory points out that this is more than a *Purple Rose of Cairo*-esque story in which the horrors venture from the screen into our world. "The horror at the center of the story is intricately tied to the Theater itself," Gregory said, "and while the horror may not be coming from the screen to our own world there is definitely as much terror on the screen as there is off."

Is there any particular favorite old theater on which Gregory is modelling the theater of this series, or is the small-town old-fashioned theater just an amalgam of a number of theaters the writer has visited over the years? "I remember as a child going to a variety of fifty cent and dollar theaters," Gregory said, "and the personality of those movie theaters inspired the look of the theater in this series... Too bad these kinds of places don't really exist any more."

The Theater is, "as of now, a five-issue miniseries," Gregory said. "Who knows after that. I always said *The Waking* was just a four issue series but here I am a year and a half later writing the next volume of that series—so you never really know!"

This is a the latest in a series of Zenescope projects moving away from their "stock in trade" *Grimm Fairy Tales*-related stories. What led to the decision to branch out? Is there any risk involved insofar as the publisher is concerned--any risk of Zenescope's branded identity? "When it comes to creator-owned books, I'm pretty much at the whims of whatever I'm writing," Gregory explained. "*The Theater* was an idea I came up with some time, ago and the fact that it was such a different type of horror story appealed to Zenescope a great deal, I think, considering they have been doing horror right for some years now. "

Zenescope is also known for the "bad girl" nature of many of its projects; will there be any of those elements in *The Theater?* "There is a bit of 'bad girl' in this story, but in a much different way than anyone is expecting. I tried to do something I had never seen done in horror comics before, and I can't tell you how excited I am and how much I'm looking forward to people checking it out. It's gonna be a wild ride and not everyone is going to make it out alive!"

The Theater #1, written by *Raven Gregory* and illustrated by *Martin Montiel, Michael Garcia,* and others, is slated for September release.

Make Mine Shakespeare!

During his almost seven-decade career, *Stan Lee* has more than once been described as the Shakespeare of comics—but later this year, *Stan Lee* will team up with Shakespeare for a new comics project, ***Romeo and Juliet: The War.***

More specifically, Stan will present an updated adaptation of Shakespeare's best-known tragedy. "This is the graphic novel I've always dreamed of doing," Stan said. "Take one of the world's greatest stories, known and loved throughout the globe, place it against the background of a future age, a more violent, science-gone-mad age—embellish it with the most powerful, dazzling, illustrations ever seen and produce it in the largest, most impressive format of all. ***Romeo and Juliet: The War!*** It's the

SOMEBODY SHREDDED THAT STORE'S IRON BARS—AND YOU'RE THE ONE WITH THE SPIDER STRENGTH!
SURE, I CRASHED THROUGH THEM—LEAPING AT A CRIME BOSS!
IF THAT'S TRUE, WALL-CRAWLER—
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THEN HER PHOTOS WOULD SHOW THAT OTHER CROOK—AND THEY DON'T!
JAMESON! WHAT ROCK DID YOU CRAWL OUT FROM UNDER?
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 8-18

crowning achievement in this, the age of the graphic novel."

Romeo and Juliet: The War takes Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers and places them in the futuristic science fictional empire Empire of Verona, the most powerful territory on Earth. The Montagues (powerful cyborgs made of artificial DNA) and the Capulets (genetically enhanced humans known for their speed and agility0 worked in tandem to destroy all threats to the city. With no one left to fight, the Montagues and Capulets found themselves a new enemy: each other.

Romeo and Juliet the War, an oversized 10" x 13" oversized coffee-table book available in both hardcover and softcover, is slated for November release.

Fantastic Forerunner

Well, it appears that almost everyone's predictions are coming true: ***Fantastic Four*** is returning with its 600th issue! After the seeming death of Johnny Storm in ***Fantastic Four #587,*** the book has continued as ***FF,*** with Spider-Man and others filling in for a presumed-dead Human Torch. But if the images that Marvel has shared are to be believed, the Torch is back, hotter than ever, in the quadruple-length ***Fantastic Four #600.*** Of course, we'll know for sure what's going on in November, when ***Fantastic Four #600*** by *Jonathan Hickman, Steve Epting, Carmine Di Giandomenico, Leinil Yu,* and *Farel Dalrymple,* with covers by *Joe Quesada, John Romita Jr.,* and *Art Adams.*

The return of ***Fantastic Four*** to Marvel's line-up doesn't mean that ***FF*** is coming to an end, though: the publisher has already confirmed that the spinoff series will continue as well, with the ***FF #12*** accompanying ***Fantastic Four #600*** in November. Just as the relaunch of ***Thor*** and ***Captain America*** led to expansions of those franchises, so will the return of ***Fantastic Four*** offer the opportunity to add a second ongoing title to the line.

Back to Press

- ***Amazing Spider-Man #667 2nd Printing Ramos Lizard Sketch Variant*** (JUN118192), in stores 8/31.
- ***Amazing Spider-Man #667 2nd Printing Ramos Hero Sketch Variant*** (JUN118193), in stores 8/31.
- ***Fear Itself #2 4th Printing*** (JUN118242), featuring a variant cover by *Stuart Immonen,* in stores 9/14.
- ***Fear Itself #3 3rd Printing*** (JUN118243), featuring a variant cover by *Steve McNiven,* in stores 9/14.
- ***The Infinite #1 2nd Printing*** (JUN118041), in stores 9/14.
- ***Mighty Thor #4 2nd Printing*** (JUN118241), featuring a variant cover by *Olivier Coipel,* in stores 9/14.
- ***Ultimate Comics Fallout #4 2nd Printing*** (JUN118244), featuring a variant cover by *Mark Bagley,* in stores 9/7. (And here's a first: Marvel is creating an incentive 2nd Printing featuring a cover image by *Sara Pichelli*—but in order to receive *any* of this variant, retailers have to order a significant quantity of the Bagley 2nd printing. Check with the folks at your friendly neighborhood comic shop for price and availability on this one.)

I WASN'T TRYING TO INCRIMINATE YOU, SPIDEY!
HER PHOTOS SHOW SPIDER-MAN BREAKING INTO THAT STORE!
DO YOU SEE THE "CRIME BOSS" HE SAYS HE WAS CHASING?
WELL— NO.
SPIDER-MAN, WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE YOU IN!
!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 8-19
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I TELL YOU, I LEAPED AT A CRIMINAL WHO CALLS HIMSELF "THE BIG BOSS"!
BUT SOMEHOW, I PASSED RIGHT THROUGH HIM!
NOW YOU'RE SAYING HE WAS A GHOST?
Yeah, AND THE GANG OF CROOKS WHO LOOTED THE PLACE WERE PIXIES, RIGHT?
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 8-20
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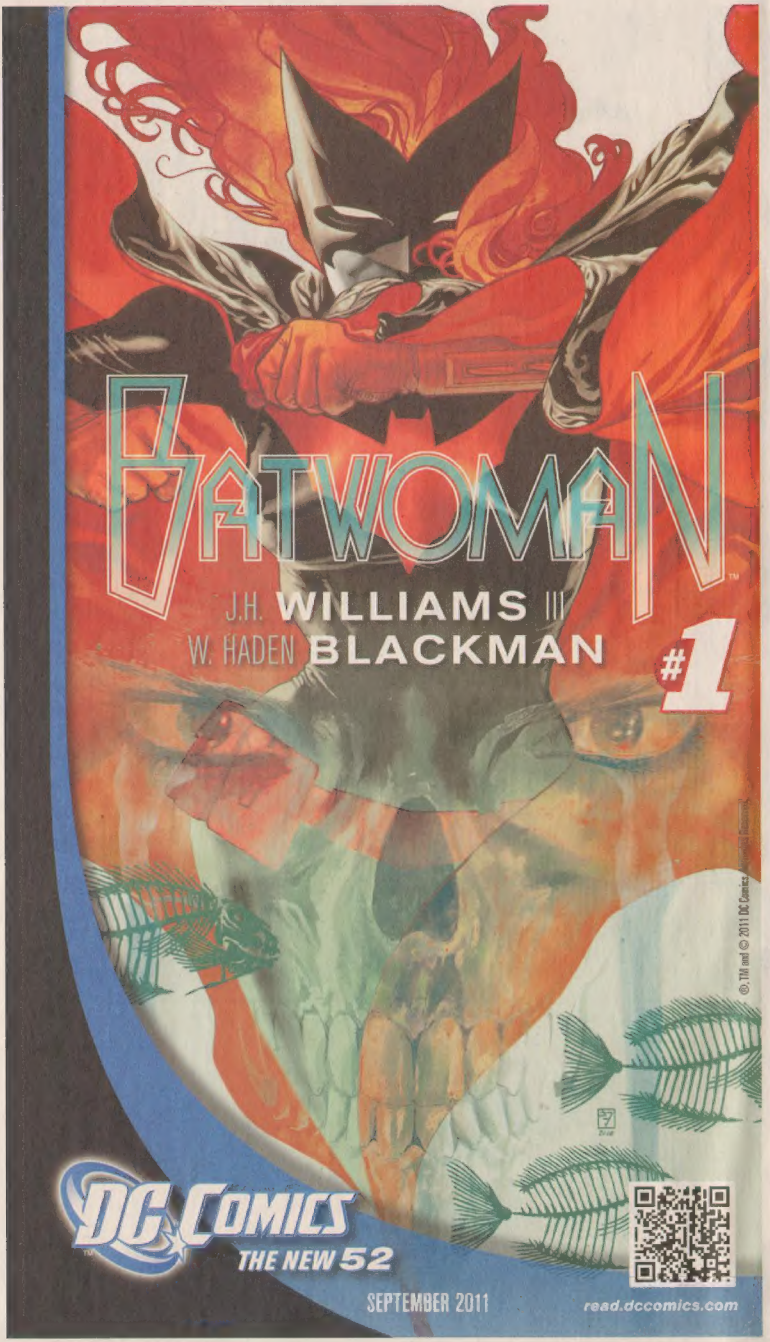
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